



TOWN OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE

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June 2, 2021

Alberta Coal Policy Committee
c/o Minister of Energy, Deputy House
Office of the Minister, Energy
324 Legislature Building
10800 -97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Email: energy.coalpolicy@gov.ab.ca

RE: OPEN-PIT COAL MINING IN THE EASTERN SLOPES

Dear Coal Policy Committee,

As a municipality located within the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains, our municipality is directly impacted by any decisions regarding Open-Pit Coal Mining in our region. As leaders and representatives of our community, we urge the Coal Policy Committee to implement and adhere to a thorough process in consideration of any Coal Mining. We understand and have participated in the online engagement opportunity that has been presented, however, to ensure this process captures relevant data and feedback, we encourage you to ensure extensive and direct consultation, including collecting scientific and other data regarding environmental considerations, a cost/benefit analysis, and a review of and possibly amendments to, enforcement practices and regulations for environmental protection.

Extensive consultation with the public, First Nations and industry is necessary to collect a balanced and diverse understanding of the needs and opinions of our stakeholders. These varied perspectives provide opportunities for new ideas, builds trust and supports the ideals of transparency. Policy development, based on this input, is extremely important in making relevant, responsive and sustainable decisions that will improve the livability of our region and province, while also enhancing the quality of the decisions being made.

Considerations for the environmental impacts, including land disruption, water quality, air quality and potential health impacts to humans and wildlife, should be included in the process, as the relationship between our environment and sustainable development has never been more important. We encourage that scientific research be incorporated with the cultural, social and value-based aspirations of our citizens.

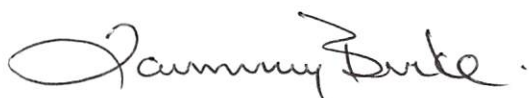
A cost and benefit analysis encompassing employment in the industry, economic revenue, and the effect on tourism and potential recreational development, ought to be considered. Any decision regarding Open-Pit Coal Mining should also consider the potential impact on our beautiful and pristine, natural and culturally rich region, popular for those who enjoy outdoor pursuits such as camping, hiking, canoeing and fishing.

Finally, the enforcement of environmental protection practices and regulations should be reviewed. As Rocky Mountain House is home to the headwaters of the North Saskatchewan River, it is necessary for us to protect this vital water source. Our environment, including our headwater, is a most important resource for all of us, including those generations that follow. Protection is therefore paramount, so regulatory authorities should ensure compliance with regulations through enforcement, to reduce the risk of any contamination activities, with penalties that serve as a deterrent and with assurances of penalties for any breaches.

Council of the Town of Rocky Mountain House believes that a transparent, accountable, collaborative and regulatory approach, that is subject to extensive consultation, environmental considerations, a cost benefit analysis and a review of regulatory processes and regulations, will ultimately lead to the best decision regarding these proposed developments.

If you have any questions, I can be reached at tburke@rockymtnhouse.com or by phone at 403-846-8129. Alternately, you may contact our Chief Administrative Officer, Dean Krause at dkrause@rockymtnhouse.com or by phone at 403-844-3431.

Respectfully,



Mayor Tammy Burke

CC: Honourable Jason Nixon, Minister of Environment and Parks, MLA for Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House- Sundre
Honorable Sonya Savage, Minister of Energy
Town Council
Town of High River, Mayor and Council
CAO, Dean Krause